

individual Confucianism, with Christianity, and with Mohammedanism ; great men. $\wedge_n f$ $\wedge_{us} ft$ may we }[]lave been wjth the religion of Osiris.

Certainly we shall do less violence to the evidence if we accept the unanimous tradition of ancient Egypt on this point than if we resolve the figure of Osiris into a myth pure and simple. And when we consider that from the earliest to the latest times Egyptian kings were worshipped as gods both in life and in death, there appears to be nothing extravagant or improbable in the view that one of them by his personal qualities excited a larger measure of devotion than usual during his life and was remembered with fonder affection and deeper reverence after his death ; till in time his beloved memory, dimmed, transfigured, and encircled with a halo of glory by the mists of time, grew into the dominant religion of his people. At least this theory is reasonable enough to deserve a serious consideration. If we accept it, we may suppose that the mythical elements, which legend undoubtedly ascribed to Osiris, were later accretions which gathered about his memory like ivy about a ruin. There is no Improbability in such a supposition ; on the contrary, all analogy is in its favour, for nothing is more certain than that myths grow like weeds round the great historical figures of the past.

The In recent years the historical reality of Osiris as a king historical $v \wedge_Q$ once |{vQd a and reigned in Egypt has been maintained

reality of & $t > s r$
Osiris as an by more than one learned scholar ; and without venturing $E > \} \wedge cLn$ to pronounce a decided opinion on so obscure and difficult a be sup- question, I think it worth while,

following the example of
 modernⁿ Wallis Budge, to indicate certain
 modern African analogies
 African which tend to confirm the view
 that beneath the

analogies. mythical wrappings of Osiris there lay the
 mummy of a
 dead man. At all events the analogies which I
 shall cite
 suffice to prove that the custom of worshipping
 dead kings
 has not been confined to Egypt, but has been
 apparently
 widespread throughout Africa, though the
 evidence now at
 our disposal only enables us to detect the
 observance of the

¹ It is maintained by the discoverer of the tomb of Osiris at Abydos, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* in which the author Monsieur E. Amelineau, in his work *Le Tombeau d'Osiris* (Paris, 1899) and from the religion and customs of modern Egypt by Dr. E. A. Wallis Budge in his African tribes.